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FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND

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MEMORANDUM FOR Mr. Ray S. Cline, Deputy Director (Intelligence),
Central Intelligence Agency

Mr. Allan Evans, Deputy Director for Research,
Intelligence and Research, Department of State

[redacted] Chief of Staff,

Defense Intelligence Agency

Mr. Ludwell L. Montague, Board of National Estimates,
Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: NSA Comments on Mission, and Actions Derived from PNIO's

1. As agreed at the first meeting of the PNIO Review Committee of USIB, these comments on the PNIO's have been prepared and are forwarded for consideration.

2. The nature of the dependence of the COMINT and ELINT Requirements Lists on the PNIO's is outlined in paragraph 3.c. of DCID 6/1, SIGINT Committee:

"3. The SIGINT Committee shall:

"c. Prepare, revise and recommend statements of COMINT and ELINT requirements and priorities based on national intelligence objectives which will govern the collection and processing of COMINT and ELINT."

3. To relate these national objectives to the national SIGINT effort, the SIGINT Committee prepares the COMINT and ELINT Requirements Lists (CRL and ERL) stemming from, and consistent with, the PNIO's. In their preparation, the SIGINT Committee takes into consideration the operational needs of all its member departments and agencies at the Washington level, and the requirements and EEI's of their commands or other activities in the field. Thus, these two lists, the CRL and ERL, represent the totality of priority intelligence requirements, in

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priority order, which can and should be satisfied wholly or partially through utilization of scarce and expensive SIGINT resources. They are issued to the Director, NSA, as basic overall guidance for planning and programming all U. S. SIGINT activities under his control.

4. Normally, then, the CRL and the ERL are the basis for annual programming of the SIGINT effort, with a supplemental guidance mechanism serving the purpose of enabling SIGINT consumers to influence the direction, scope and nature of the SIGINT effort in response to changing world situations and technological surprises. However, because the latest version of the CRL was prepared in 1960 and is, therefore, largely obsolete, the SIGINT Committee has requested the Director, NSA, to take into account the latest approved version of the PNIO's in arriving at any programming decision affecting the national SIGINT effort. Furthermore, the PNIO's themselves are being used by the SIGINT Committee and DOD as one of the major factors in arriving at an evaluation of the effectiveness and the need for various SIGINT programs.

5. Even if these latter considerations did not apply, at minimum the PNIO's would be looked to for justification of any priority signals intelligence effort not exclusively supporting a military command or department, but rather directed toward support of those elements of Government engaged in formulation and execution of national security policy. To insure consistent guidance for the U. S. SIGINT effort, it is essential that the PNIO's reflect priority pressures which are being brought to bear on NSA by the White House, the DCI, and the Department of State for increased intelligence on such areas [redacted]

[redacted] where adequate SIGINT capabilities do not exist. This is particularly important when increased personnel and dollar requirements, base rights problems, technical and training lead-times, expensive special platforms and major diversions of effort or build-up of additional processing and analytic effort within NSA and the Service Cryptologic Agencies are involved.

6. The major guidance problems for the national SIGINT effort are not, then, [redacted] where a good collection, analysis, and processing base is already well established. The critical guidance problems are rather in the [redacted] areas where another Cuba might occur, and where the national security policy level interest might be short-changed because adequate collection and processing capabilities do not exist. It is not felt reasonable to look

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to the CRL to provide justification for new or expanded priority effort not treated in the PNIO's as warranting priority handling, nor is it considered reasonable to have national policy level priority pressures brought to bear on NSA which are not comparably treated in the PNIO's. NSA feels that the PNIO's should be sufficiently forward-looking to set forth the community's "favorite candidates for disaster". It is only through such forward-looking consideration that steps can be taken sufficiently in advance to enable the national SIGINT effort to obtain "footholds" in cold war areas of new or newly increased interest. In this light, the statement in paragraph 2 of the Annex to the PNIO's that "most of the intelligence required in the formulation and execution of national security policy will be the product of normal intelligence collection and research" is of questionable utility as guidance to the SIGINT effort, since (a) it does not enable differentiation between those intelligence factors on which some collection and research is desired and those for which none is required, and (b) it appears to be based entirely upon consideration of available in-place [redacted] resources.

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7. Form and Presentation. The PNIO's still suffer from some imprecision in the framing of objectives, and, perhaps rightly, make no differentiation in relative importance between objectives within each of its four categories of importance. NSA has no particular objection to the present method of setting forth the relative priority of the objectives (which could be expressed as a simple numerical sequence with a statement that the first was the most important), however, it might assist the community if efforts were made to make the individual PNIO's more consistent in form, content and scope.

8. The Concept. NSA believes that the concept as outlined in NSCID No. 1, paragraph 3.b.(1), and as further defined in the Introduction to DCID 1/3, should remain unchanged, but should be understood as implying for the SIGINT source that any factor not listed probably will not be programmed for priority attention and effort. In certain cold war areas this could cause delay in responding to a sudden emergency, or, at worst, almost complete incapability to respond.

9. The Mission. NSA believes that the mission of the PNIO's as defined in NSCID No. 1, paragraph 3.b.(1) (c), and as further defined in the Preamble to the PNIO's, paragraphs 1, 2 and 4, is

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sound, given the understanding that the PNIO's are, and should be, used as the principal base for national priority intelligence requirements generally; thus, any interpretation of the statement in paragraph 2 of the Annex (quoted in paragraph 6, above) which would tend to exclude from the PNIO's all but the crisis areas of the moment, and perhaps only the very best bets for the immediate future, should be restated. Should such an interpretation prevail, serious consideration might well be given to the establishment of a fifth category of priority (something like the fifth category of the DIA Priorities Assignment Base) which would define those factors on which "normal collection and research" will suffice.

FOR THE DIRECTOR:



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NSA Member
PNIO Review Committee of USIB

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